

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Please amend the claims as shown.

1. (Currently Amended) Sol-gel process for the production of ~~manufactured~~ vitreous body articles containing an ~~Incompressible Insert~~ incompressible insert comprising ~~the steps of:~~

- a) providing an ~~Incompressible Insert~~ (33; 42; 52; incompressible insert;
- b) providing a container (10; 20) which can retain said ~~incompressible~~ incompressible insert in rigidly fixed position to define a space (17; 26) between ~~the~~ an inside surface of said container and ~~the~~ an external surface of said insert, and which can be rotated around ~~the~~ an axis of said insert;
- c) fixing said insert to the inside of said container in such a way as to rotate said insert as one with said container;
- d) filling said space with a sol and closing said container;
- e) rotating said container containing said sol and said insert around the axis of the ~~latter insert~~ insert for ~~all the~~ a sufficient period of time necessary to complete gelling of said sol;
- f) opening said container and extracting the composite comprising a wet gel adhering to said incompressible insert;

g) drying said wet gel, whereby said container in step e) is placed in rotation at such speed that the product P of the angular velocity  $\omega$  measured in radians per second (rad/s) and the radius r of the insert measured in centimeters (cm) is between about 20 and about 250 rad x cm/s and adding a step of glass densification of the dry gel adhering to said incompressible insert by means of heat treatment at a temperature within the range of about 800 to about 1400°C.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said incompressible insert is cylindrical.

4. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said container is cylindrical.

5. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the opening of said container and the extraction of said composite in step f) is carried out inside a bath containing a liquid.

6. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the liquid in which step f) is carried out is selected from the group consisting of alcohols, chlorinated solvents, [[or]] and CO<sub>2</sub> liquid.

7. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein step g) of drying of the wet gel is carried out in hypercritical way preceded by a gel-washing phase.

8. -12. (Cancelled)